

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-3, 6-13, and 15-22 are pending, of which claim 12 has been withdrawn. Claims 4, 5, and 14 have been canceled without prejudice and without disclaimer. Claims 1-3 and 6-13 have been amended. New dependent claims 15-22 have been added. No new matter has been introduced. Applicants believe the claims comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Claims 1, 2, and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kief et al. (US 6,775,108) in view of Cates (US 6,788,497).

Claims 3 and 6-11 depend from claim 1, and stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kief et al. and Cates, and further in view of Pust et al. (US 2003/0081359 A1).

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 13 as amended are patentable over Kief et al. and Cates because, for instance, they do not teach or suggest that at least one of said lower shield and upper shield has a first layer and a second layer formed from magnetic material, and that the coefficient of thermal expansion of said first layer is different from the coefficient of thermal expansion of said second layer.

Kief et al. discloses bottom shield 214 and top shield 216. "Bottom shield 214 and top shield 216 are each bi-layered and include a first layer (302, 304) formed of a magnetic material and a second layer (306, 308) formed of a non-magnetic material." Column 4, lines 14-17; Fig. 3-1. In other words, the bottom and top shields each have two layers including one non-magnetic layer or one formed from magnetic material. Further, each first layer (302, 304) is just a single layer which does not have different coefficients of thermal expansion. In contrast, claims 1 and 13 each recite first and second layers formed from magnetic material and having different coefficients of thermal expansion. Therefore, Kief et al. does not disclose or suggest the claimed features. Instead, Kief et al. focuses only on reducing thermal pole tip recession, and fails to teach reducing after-recorded noise.

Cates, Pust et al., and Alfoqaha et al. (US 6,859,343) do not cure the deficiencies of Kief et al., in that they also fail to teach or suggest the first layer and second layer having the properties as recited in claims 1 and 13.

Appl. No. 10/667,232
Amdt. dated August 23, 2005
Reply to Office Action of May 27, 2005

PATENT

For at least the foregoing reasons, claims 1 and 13, and claims 2, 3, 6-12, and 15-22 depending therefrom, are patentable over the cited references.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,



Chun-Pok Leung
Reg. No. 41,405

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP
Two Embarcadero Center, Eighth Floor
San Francisco, California 94111-3834
Tel: 650-326-2400
Fax: 415-576-0300
RL:rl
60568576 v1